delivered to the user. The user keeps the box with the ticket attached, and uses it to put used toner cartridges at the time of collection. The use of the shipping/collection ticket saves labor at the time of collection, for example, sparing the user the trouble of issuing a new ticket and the expediter the trouble of data entry. Also, since shipment and collection are managed by the same ticket number or the like, the collection rate for each user can be managed easily, and so forth.

The ticket numbers for the tickets issued by the main server 81 are generated by the main server 81. They are associated with user IDs and stored and managed through collaboration between the DB 8 storing various data and the main server 81. Details will be described later with reference to FIG. 20.

After filling in the fields on the ordering screen, the user presses a [Send] button. When information about the press of the button is entered in the terminal 41, ordered items and order quantity data which correspond to the list 101, settlement method data which corresponds to the selection section 102, data about the desired delivery date which corresponds to the specification section 103, and a collection flag which corresponds to the collection service registration section 104 is sent from the terminal 41 to the main server 81 in Step S3.

Next, in Step S4, based on the received data and flag, the main server 81 generates HTML data which corresponds

to an order confirmation screen and supplies the generated data to the terminal 41. Consequently, the monitor of the terminal 41 displays the order confirmation screen shown in FIG. 7. The content of the screen shown in FIG. 7 is the one which is displayed if the user has expressed his/her intention to use the collection service. If the user does not intend to use the collection service, the content of the screen will be changed to a message such as "I will not use the collection service of used toner cartridges." Such message information is generated by the main server 81.

If the order details, collection service registration information, etc. displayed on the order confirmation screen are correct, the user 4 presses an [OK] button in Step S5. Order confirmation information entered according to either the [OK] or [Cancel] button pressed by the user is sent from the terminal 41 to the main server 81 in Step S5. If there is a mistake or something the user want to correct, the user presses the [Cancel] button. If the [Cancel] button is pressed, the monitor of the terminal 41 displays the ordering screen again.

Upon receiving the order confirmation information, the main server 81 generates information which indicates a new order receipt. This information contains order number, user ID, collection flag, order history, collection history, sales representative ID, order date/time, ordered item, order quantity, desired delivery time, price, payment method, and other data.

Next, the main server 81 calculates and checks the delivery time using the customer information database and warehouse information database. Specifically, the main server 81 checks the nearby branch warehouse #1 and #2 fields associated with the user ID, checks the warehouse-specific inventory information field to see whether the branch warehouses 6 are stocked with the ordered items in quantities sufficient to meet the order quantity, and sets the delivery time based on the results of checks. Normally, if the branch warehouses 6 registered in the nearby branch warehouse #1 and #2 fields carry inventory, a delivery can be made on the next day. If the branch warehouses 6 do not carry inventory, the main server 81 determines and sets the delivery time using the warehouse information database.

Next, in Step S7, the main server 81 sends the above-mentioned order receipt information to the terminal 31 of the seller 3 in charge of the user 4 by attaching a price confirmation request. This is because the delivered price, which is set and entered in the terminal 31 by the seller 3, varies depending on the conditions of trade with the user, and thus it should be confirmed. The price confirmation request is processed immediately by software running on the terminal 31 of the seller 3, and in Step S8, price confirmation, order cancellation, or other information is returned from the terminal 31 to the main server 81. Alternatively, the price confirmation request